A TREATISE ON APPENDICITIS. By GEORGE RYERSON FWLER, M.D., Professor of Surgery in the New York Polyclinic; Surgeon to the Methodist Episcopal Hospital; Surgeon-in-Chief to the Brooklyn Hospital, etc. Second edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. 235; 58 illustrations; 13 plates, 5 colored. Octavo. Cloth. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

THE first edition of Fowler's *Appendicitis*, consisting of a revised reprint of a series of articles which appeared in the *Annals of Surgery*, undoubtedly contributed largely to the pioneer work then being accomplished in this disease. "Much of the book has been rewritten, several chapters recast, and two new chapters added," one on the differential diagnosis, and one on the medical treatment of appendicitis. The work is well printed on excellent paper and beautifully illustrated. Unfortunately the author clothes his thoughts so liberally with words that one easily loses sight of the idea or fact presented and sees only the verbal great-coat which hides it.

Although it is fashionable to believe that almost every pathological condition is due to microbic infection we are glad to observe that Fowler maintains bacteria do not necessarily play a part in all cases of sub-acute and chronic relapsing appendicitis. He suggests, from a clinical and microscopical study, that, in many of these cases, vascular and nervous lesions in the mesoappendix precede and produce the changes in the appendix, and that agglutination or the pressure of an overfilled colon may lead to an active or passive hyperemia of the organ. He considers traumatism and indigestion (enteritis?) scarcely possible as etiological factors. We have had the opportunity to observe several patients who attributed their appendiceal trouble to external injury, and Small (*Medical Record*, September 10, 1898) reports thirteen cases of appendicitis with a clear history of trauma. The instances of appendicitis preceded by digestive trouble appear to us to be quite numerous.

We find in the twenty-two pages devoted to differential diagnosis the same fault already mentioned, the essential facts are obscured by "clouds of words and lakes of ink." For instance, a table detailing the differential points between appendicitis and tubo-ovarian inflammation is given, then a paragraph each on ectopic pregnancy and pelvic hæmatocele, although gynaecologists assert the former to be an almost invariable cause of the latter; next a paragraph noting the possibility of the coexistence of adnexal and appendiceal inflammatory lesions; five pages later we are greeted with ruptured pyosalpinx, and, finally, after perusing five more pages, we are again presented with a paragraph on tubo-ovarian inflammation. Any disease accompanied by vomiting, abdominal pain, tenderness, and rigidity is liable to be confused with appendicitis. We feel confident that a list of these conditions with the distinguishing features following each would be infinitely less laborious and much more lucid. Perityphilitis and paratyphilitis are recognized, and the differential diagnosis given. We note the absence of pleurisy, pneumonia, dysmenorrhœa, intestinal parasites, acute chemical poisoning, cholera morbus, mesenteric thrombosis and embolism, and the abdominal type of influenza, all of which may be mistaken for appendicitis. In the table differentiating appendicitis from hepatic and renal colics we would have included jaundice and the history; in the one differentiating appendicitis and tubo-ovarian inflammation, the fact that salpingitis is usually bilateral, the pain often shoots down the thigh,

and the hymen is absent; and under gall-bladder lesions we would have included the fact that chills are commonly present.

In the treatment of peritonitis, Fowler deprecates the scouring of the intestines with gauze to remove patches of lymph, and places the patient in the elevated head and trunk posture to facilitate the passage of fluids away from the dangerous areas of absorption in the diaphragm. Theoretically, this procedure is as highly rational as ligaturing a limb in snake-bite, the poison entering the general circulation in greatly diminished quantities. It is diametrically opposed to the postural drainage of Clark, which we believe it will finally supplant.

Appendectomy is recommended as soon as the diagnosis of progressive appendicitis is assured. Concerning the time at which to operate, the author states that a case demanding operation within twenty-four hours of its onset is exceptional, but that if the patient is not practically well at the end of that time operation is demanded. Regarding the removal of the appendix in every case we gather that the author sometimes leaves it in the abdomen, contenting himself with drainage, but this is not definitely stated in the text.

To prepare a room for operation we are advised to remove everything portable except the carpet, which should be thoroughly soaked with several gallons of corrosive sublimate solution, "the carpet should be so wet that the water oozes from the latter when it is walked upon, as water is forced from a wet sponge when it is squeezed." The author might have added that the floor should have been well calked, and the surgeon should wear rubber boots.

Fowler employs the intermuscular operation when possible, practises typical excision of the appendix when conditions permit, and closes the abdominal wound when it goes directly into the peritoneal cavity, by a removable layer suture of silkworm-gut, which resembles the lacing of a shoe.

The work is concluded with a chapter on appendicular lesions from foreign bodies, typhlitis, perityphlitis, and paratyphlitic abscess.

The book is an exposition of the author's views and methods, based on an extensive personal experience. Little reference is made to the work of others. In its pages the alert surgeon will find little with which he is not already familiar; the general practitioner and occasional operator may find much valuable information whose guidance can be trusted with safety.

F. T. S.

INTERNATIONAL CLINICS. A Quarterly of Clinical Lectures and Especially Prepared Articles on Medicine, Neurology, Surgery, Therapeutics, Obstetrics, Pediatrics, Pathology, Dermatology, Diseases of the Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat, and other topics of interest to students and practitioners. Edited by HENRY W. CATTELL, A.M., M.D. Tenth series, Vols. III. and IV. Eleventh series, Vol. I. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1900-1901.

WITHIN the year we reviewed the first two volumes of this series, and called attention to what we regarded as defects therein contained. To Volume III. our criticisms do not apply, for whether the "symposium on genito-urinary diseases" with which it opens, or the scholarly mono-